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somely large proportion of state funds was used for political competition. Taxes were high and the entire taxation system was geared to make the poor people pay for the political and economic program of the government or of the ruling classes. Planning was poor and administration far from efficient. Bohemia-Moravia had inherited from Austria a relatively competent administrative machinery, and Hungary's was organized along nineteenth-century lines. Administrative systems in former Russian and Turkish areas were a continuation of the previous imperial regimes, and were considered definitely the worst in Eastern Europe. Inefficiency and corruption mitigated somewhat the dictatorial character of these administrations. Bribery was customary and necessary on every level and affected the poor and the minorities. The problem of corruption was most serious in high official circles. Often the biggest fortunes were made in politics through embezzling discretionary funds that were left at the disposal of government members. Selling protective tariffs to industrialists in order to receive shares from foreign companies for concessions was a prevalent practice. Administrative officials were endowed with the nickname "bicyclists," which carried the implication that these officials trampled upon their subordinates and bowed before their bosses.

This attitude and the belief that the masses should support all projects of the ruling circles produced a harsh conflict of interests between the bourgeoisie, the mixed aristocratic and middle class, and the industrial workers and peasants. The fundamental conflict, however, was between the bureaucracy and the peasantry. The great differences in the cultural levels in many of the Eastern European countries made things worse. Different religious and ethnic groups and contrasting social standards contributed to regional hostilities and did nothing to facilitate the task of the administrators. The fault lay not alone with the rulers and administrators as is so often supposed by Western authors and statesmen. The people in